

**SSAC – South-South Academia Cooperation
Knowledge Sharing Platform for African Universities in the Transport Sector**

**Call for Comparative Research Papers by Early-Career Researchers
Technologies for the Informal Public Transport Sector in Sub-Saharan African Cities**

Questions and responses

Important: we remind all applicants to read the full call text carefully before sending a query by email.

Is there a standard format that the abstract must follow? For example, can we include elements such as tables, diagrams, or bibliographical references?

The content of the abstract must comply with the elements and formatting defined in the call.

In general, the abstract should be written in full text, i.e. avoid tables and graphical content, and avoid references and footnotes. As SSAC works in three languages, the abstracts must be easy to translate for the review process.

Also note that the submission reviewers will come from different disciplines. Avoid using terminology or referring to concepts that are only known within a specific field when writing the abstract.

Are the names, addresses and affiliations of the research team included in the abstract's word count limit, or is the word count limit only for the body text describing the proposed research?

In general, the aim with an abstract should be to present the proposed research as clearly and concisely as possible. The starting point should not be to use up all the available space. Also bear in mind the abstract evaluators: keeping the text focussed and well-presented will likely aid their task.

Aim to have all of the text on the abstract page, including the title and author details, be within the requested word limit. If this is not possible, then ensure that you always meet all of the formatting requirements set out in the call document, avoid the text looking too dense or being difficult to read, and ensure that at least the body text of the abstract is within the limit.

Will the informal public transport technology or technologies on which we propose to conduct research have to be ready (e.g. designed or implemented) by the time the application is submitted?

The technologies on which you propose to conduct research may be prospective or 'speculative' and need not be implemented on a small or large scale. However, you must be able to demonstrate that they are relevant and/or feasible in the local context and to the informal public transport sector, in line with the considerations set out in the full text of the call.

Our team would like to propose conducting research on informal public transport technologies in two secondary cities in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Is this in line with the call?

Yes. SSAC welcomes research conducted in secondary cities. As specified in the call, the proposed cities (whether they are secondary, primary, or a combination of primary and secondary cities) must be located in at least two different countries in SSA.

Can there be more than one abstract proposal by the same team or from the same institution?

Teams or institutions can submit more than one abstract. In such cases, each abstract submission must: comply to the requirements set out in the full SSAC call document; be a complete and separate submission; and propose a coherent project in its own right (i.e. that one proposal does not rely on the outcome of one of the other proposals). Each abstract will be evaluated based on its own merits.

I hold an academic position at a qualifying institution in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Do I qualify to be part of a core team?

The cut-off for being part of a core team is having completed your PhD less than five years ago at a university or research institution in SSA.

Individuals holding more established academic positions as well as other experienced experts from the public or private sectors are welcome to advise prospective core team members on how to prepare their abstracts and meet the requirements of the call. In this case their names should not appear in the abstract.

Alternatively, experienced academics or experts can play a limited role in working with the core team to develop the abstract and, if such abstract is selected, in the research and/or paper writing. In such cases the more established academic or expert can be listed as a co-author at the end of the list of authors in the abstract.

The CVs of such more established academics or experts should not be submitted along with the abstract. They will also not qualify to be remunerated or to receive any other financial support from SSATP.

I am an early-career researcher from a country in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and my research also focuses on SSA. I am currently enrolled in a master's or PhD degree at an institution that is not in SSA. Do I qualify to be one of the three or four core team members in a submission to this call?

No. The three or four core team members must be based in a country in SSA and currently be enrolled at or be affiliated with a university or research institution that is located in SSA.

However, if you don't qualify to be a core team member, you can approach a core team to join them as a collaborator. Collaborators will not be remunerated or receive travel support from SSATP but can be listed as co-authors at the end of the list of authors in the abstract.

Note that in such cases it is up to teams and collaborators to link up at their own initiative. Collaborator CVs must not be attached to the abstract submission.

What is the duration of the project and SSATP's support for the selected research teams?

The main period of work is envisaged for the first three months of the project, during which research and exchange visits are scheduled. A lower level of support is envisaged for writing and finalizing articles during the following three months. In total, the work is expected to take place during the first six months of 2025, but on a limited and part-time basis throughout this period.
